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DAKAR PASS TO AMEMBASSY BISSAU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/26/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [AO](#)

SUBJECT: ANGOLA CHAIRS SOUTH ATLANTIC PEACE ZONE
ORGANIZATION

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Classified By: Ambassador Cynthia Efird for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

11. (C) Summary. Angola hosted the sixth Ministerial Conference of the South Atlantic Peace and Cooperation Zone from June 18-19, 2007 in Luanda, and now chairs the organization. The main outcome of the conference was approval of the Luanda Action Plan (LAP), an extremely broad paper calling for greater cooperation in political, economic, social and cultural areas among member States with the aim of safeguarding stability in the "Peace Zone." In resurrecting this moribund organization, the GRA is taking yet another step at assuming a leadership role in regional and international fora. What remains to be seen is whether or not the institutional capacity exists to meet the demands placed on it by these commitments. End Summary.

12. (U) From June 18-19, 2007, the Government of the Republic of Angola (GRA) hosted the Sixth Ministerial Meeting of the Zone of Peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic in Luanda. More than 150 representatives, including some Foreign Ministers, from twenty one of the twenty four member states attended (See para 7 for member list). The group was founded in 1986; however its last ministerial meeting occurred in October 1998 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Since then the group has carried out its activities through the member states, respective UN missions. In preparation for this Ministerial, the GRA held consultations and workshop discussions in New York (March 2007), Montevideo (April) and Buenos Aires (May 2007).

13. (U) The conference produced the Luanda Action Plan (LAP), an all-encompassing document which encourages member states, cooperation in combating drug trafficking, illegal arms trading and trans-national organized crime. It recommends the full implementation of the UN Action Program on the Prevention, Fight, and Eradication of the Illegal Trade in Small Arms. It also calls for member states to engage in

peace-building within the Zone, including in conflict prevention. The LAP calls for economic cooperation in contributing to poverty eradication by creating partnerships for sustainable development, trade, investment and tourism. Finally it encourages cooperation on scientific research, biodiversity, marine issues and ecology. The LAP also calls for cooperation with the various existing regional and sub-regional organizations such as the AU, OAS, SADC, CEEAC, CEMAC and ECOWAS to help safeguard peace and economic prosperity in the zone.

¶4. (U) Both Angola's Minister of External Relations Joao Miranda and Angola's Prime Minister were on hand to welcome the delegations at the opening ceremony. Minister Miranda emphasized the GRA's desire to revitalize the organization and encourage greater South-South cooperation. Prime Minister Dias dos Santos emphasized the need to preserve the peace in the South Atlantic zone, by combating the trafficking of arms, drugs, persons, and money laundering. He encouraged the creating of mechanisms that will allow member states to assist in peacekeeping and humanitarian operations within the zone.

¶5. (C) We understand from our Brazilian and Argentine counterparts that neither country had a strong interest in reviving the Zone. Argentina was represented by its Vice Foreign Minister, Brazil by its Secretary General. The Brazilian Ambassador told us that when the GRA began talks on reviving the moribund organization, his government advocated that this organization's work be carried out at UN facilities through existent delegations. He added that the Brazilian government thought utilizing existing staffs was a much more practical solution than creating a permanent secretariat, with inevitable associated costs.

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Comment: Angola Projecting onto the World Stage?

¶6. (C) The Angolan initiative on the South Atlantic Zone of Peace and Cooperation is the latest in a series through which Angola is projecting a higher profile in multilateral fora. In the last year, the GRA was the catalyst for forming the Association of African Diamond Producing Nations and hosted the group's first meeting in November 2006. It also has offered to cover costs for the Gulf of Guinea Commission Secretariat in Luanda for its first year. Earlier this year,

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Angola also lobbied for and won a seat on the UN Human Rights Council. Angola's commitment to a more active international presence is real, but the GRA has only limited capacity to handle the institutional commitments it is assuming. End Comment.

¶7. (U) Member states are: Angola, Argentina, Benin, Brazil, Cameroon, Cape-Verde, Congo-Brazzaville, Cote-D'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Namibia, Nigeria, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Sierra-Leone, South Africa, Togo and Uruguay.
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